

## **Proclamation 7071—Women's History Month, 1998**

*March 2, 1998*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

The Preamble to the Constitution begins, "We, the people." Yet that phrase, inspiring as it is, has not always included all Americans. Women's history in America has been the story of the struggle of women of all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds to be included in that simple but powerful statement. It is the story as well of how, in striving to reach their own great potential, women have strengthened and enriched our Nation.

In every era of American history, women have braved enormous challenges to change our world for the better. Women of faith in the early 17th century dared a dangerous journey and the unknown wilderness to seek freedom of conscience in a new land. As our Nation struggled for independence and to establish a new, more enlightened form of government, women like Esther DeBerdt Reed and Sarah Franklin Bache supplied food, clothes, and funds for Washington's soldiers. Freedom fighters like Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman led hundreds of enslaved men and women to liberty through the Underground Railroad, and social reformers like Gertrude Bonnin advanced the human rights of American Indians. Suffragists like Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Luisa Capetillo challenged the conventions of their times and sought to secure for women one of the most basic rights within our democracy.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the women's rights movement in America and its immeasurable contributions to our Nation's promise of justice and equality for all. The visionary women and men who gathered in Seneca Falls, New York, in July of 1848 for the first Women's Rights Convention in history gave voice so powerfully to women's aspirations for inclusion and empowerment that their vision continues to shape our world today.

Once disenfranchised, American women now serve at the highest levels of govern-

ment, as Justices of the Supreme Court and in increasing numbers in the Cabinet and the United States Congress. Once denied the resources and opportunities to play organized sports, American women made sporting history this year by winning the first-ever Olympic Gold Medal in women's ice hockey. Women are cracking the glass ceilings of corporate management to lead some of our country's most prominent businesses. As parents and partners, entrepreneurs and artists, politicians and scientists, women are helping to build an America in which all citizens, regardless of gender, are free to live out their dreams.

Thanks to the efforts of women leaders, little girls across America today know far fewer limits than did their mothers and grandmothers. But there still remains work to be done to create a more just America, and we must rededicate ourselves to ending the discrimination that women still face. We must continue our efforts to help women succeed at work and at home, to be free from violent crime, and to enjoy quality health care. In doing so, we will confirm our conviction that "We, the people" includes us all.

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 1998 as Women's History Month. I encourage all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and to remember throughout the year the many voices and stories of courageous women who have made our Nation strong.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

**William J. Clinton**

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 4.

**Statement on the United Nations  
Security Council Vote on Iraq**

*March 2, 1998*

Tonight's unanimous vote of the United Nations Security Council sends the clearest possible message: Iraq must make good on its commitment to give the international weapons inspectors immediate, unconditional, and unrestricted access to any suspect site, any place, any time. All of the members of the Council agree that failure to do so will result in the severest consequences for Iraq.

In the days and weeks ahead, the inspectors will renew their mission to find and destroy Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons capacity and the missiles to deliver them. Iraq now has the responsibility to turn the commitment it has made into full compliance.

**Remarks at the John F. Kennedy  
Presidential Library Foundation  
Dinner**

*March 2, 1998*

Thank you very much, Senator, Vicki, Caroline and Ed, other members of the Kennedy family, Paul Kirk. And I say a special word of thanks to all of you who have made this evening possible. I thank Senator Jeffords and Senator Thurmond and Senator Hatch for being here tonight to restrain the partisan impulses that might otherwise overtake Senator Kennedy and me. *[Laughter]* I thank Yo Yo Ma and Jill and all the other musicians who have come here. Mr. Secretary General, thank you for the wonderful job you do here at the OAS.

I think I should begin by saying that for me this is not an obligation, it is an honor, not only because like every other member of my generation I was inspired by President Kennedy but because Hillary and Chelsea and I have been profoundly moved by the uncommon kindnesses of this family to ours.

In 1991 I had an event in New York when no one in New York knew my name, and I looked up and John Kennedy was there. I think it would be fair to say that his name recognition was 5 times higher than mine among all in attendance. *[Laughter]* Early in

1992 Mrs. Kennedy came to an event for me and later went out of her way to be helpful and kind to Hillary and to Chelsea in ways that are difficult to relate but impossible to overestimate.

The other day we were spending a weekend in Camp David, and I went out with a couple of Members of Congress, cavorting around in the lousy weather. Hillary stayed home with her friends and watched Jackie Kennedy's White House special, marveling again about the incredible work that was done to preserve America's house by Mrs. Kennedy.

And I do believe that, no matter who writes the history books, when people look back on this century, they will say that Edward Kennedy was one of the ablest and most productive, most compassionate, and most effective men who served in the United States Senate in the entire history of the country.

The JFK Library and its museum are national treasures, but I would like to talk about three things that are to some extent both more intangible and more tangible in the legacy of President Kennedy that will be enshrined forever if all of us do our job and keep this great enterprise going.

First, the spirit of citizen service, most clearly embodied in the Peace Corps. President Kennedy said that he wanted to speak to those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery. We pledged to them our best efforts to help them help themselves. Five weeks later, 37 years ago yesterday, the Peace Corps was born. In 3 weeks, when I travel to Africa, my first stop will be Ghana, the first place President Kennedy's Peace Corps volunteers went to serve. Now they have gone, over the years, to 132 nations.

Tomorrow America will celebrate these accomplishments during the first ever Peace Corps Day, when thousands of former Peace Corps volunteers, including Secretary Shalala, who was a volunteer in Iran, and I might add has volunteered to go back if it will help our new efforts. *[Laughter]* Thousands of Peace Corps volunteers have agreed to talk with students around our country about their life-changing experiences.